

March 7, 2011
Testimony
HB 6498

Dear Senator Stillman, Representative Fleishman and members of the Education Committee:

My name is Barbara Skrebutenas. I have been an educator in the town of Wolcott for 32 years and am currently the immediate past president of the Connecticut Music Educators Association.

I am writing regarding HB 6498 AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL DISTRICTS and with particular concern to sections 7(c) and 18.

With a state budget crisis at hand, the need to consider a delay in the implementation of the rigorous 21st century high school graduation requirements that were approved by the legislature last spring is understandable. However, it is in the best interest of Connecticut's children that any delay not be too long and that the substantive requirements within it stay intact.

Raising the bar for Connecticut's students inevitably will come with some financial impact but municipalities should carefully plan ahead to support such change. The impact of not implementing these new requirements or whittling them down into a less effective, less balanced version is far greater over the long term as it will affect our Connecticut workforce.

As you consider delaying the new graduation requirements and also the creation of a task force to examine its' financial impact on the states' municipalities, please work to ensure that preparing our students for the 21st century workforce remains first and foremost, and that our students will be able to sustain 4 years of study in each of the six core academic areas as defined by the College Board and federal legislation, i.e.: English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, World Languages, and the Fine Arts.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Barbara Skrebutenas
Trumbull, CT